



Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

State Plan Attachments

Federal Fiscal Year 2008

Our Vision:

Your success at work means our work is a success.

Our Mission:

**Preparing individuals with disabilities for
employment and community enrichment**

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Administrator**

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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IDAHO DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
STATE PLAN FOR THE
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES PROGRAM
AND
STATE PLAN SUPPLEMENT FOR THE STATE
SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM

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SUMMARY OF INPUT FROM STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR FFY2006

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) reviewed the Agency policy on Self Employment Plans, provided comment and ultimately approved this revised policy. The Agency did incorporate several SRC suggestions into the policy.

The SRC was advised of the Agency plans to change from Central Office control of Field Services to three Zone Managers who would share supervision and responsibility from the field. Input was provided to the Agency, which accepted SRC suggestions, and ultimately the Agency made this major change.

The Agency shared in an ongoing manner, the rewrite of the Manual of Operations as each segment was completed in a draft form. SRC input was provided as each segment was completed, and upon final completion of the document by the Agency it was again presented to the Council in its entirety, and the Council voted to approve the new Manual. The Council commended the Agency on the simplicity and straightforwardness of the new document.

The Agency presented their draft of the Case Review Template, which was developed to assure areas of concern shown during a recent 107 Review by RSA, would be corrected and avoided in the future. The Council complimented this desk top counselor aid and supported the Agency action.

The SRC was advised of the Agency's intent to develop "soft caps" for some case services. The Agency responded to several minor concerns by Council members, adjustments in verbiage were made, and explanations of how and when exceptions to these recommended soft caps could take place was explained to the Council's satisfaction.

The Agency routinely provides the Council with updates on their compliance with CSPD requirements and other Human Resource actions. When questions or concerns are voiced by Council members, satisfactory explanations are given or changes are made.

The Agency provides an update of its budget and spending patterns twice a year at quarterly SRC meetings.

The Council completes at least one Consumer Satisfaction Survey of past or present VR Clients each year. The results of this survey are shared with the Agency, and adjustments are made in policy or procedure by the Agency if necessary.

The Agency requested an SRC member's assistance on the interview and selection committee when a new Chief of Field Services position was chosen.

The Council, in the form of the Chair and or Vice Chair has been involved in the 2006 and 2007 State Plans and their amendments.

The Agency routinely invites the SRC Chair and or Vice Chair to attend Management meetings and provide input on issues related to policy and procedure within the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR).

The Chair of the SRC was involved in the RSA teleconference training on 2/20/07 related to the 2008 State Plan.

The IDVR Administrator initiates a twice per month telephone conference with the Chair of the SRC to share ongoing Agency issues. The Chair in turn shares this information with the Executive Committee and full Council if necessary, when comments or feedback is requested.

ATTACHMENT 4.7(b) (3)

STATEWIDENESS AND WAIVER OF STATEWIDENESS

The Division provides services in one (1) or more political subdivisions of the State that increases services or expands the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan and:

- (1) The Division verifies in the specific Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) (see included attachments) that the contributions of these political subdivisions are certified as non-federal dollars attached for services, including funds contributed to a local agency by a private agency, organization or individual, and
- (2) The Division ensures that the services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments, and
- (3) The Division ensures that all services administered are in full agreement with the rules and regulations governing General Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and that the DSU is in full agreement with the provision of those services.

The Division continues to note an increase in the number of Corrections clients being referred to the Division for services. There are two identified areas in the state where correctional facilities are housed that require additional VR staff and resources to ensure that adequate vocational services are provided to the corrections population. This staff works solely with the Corrections population. To meet this need, an MOA with the Idaho Department of Correction (IDOC) was developed to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to felony clients/offenders both in an IDOC institution and in the community to prepare these individuals for reentry into the community by providing IDVR services. This MOA covers Correctional institutions in the Boise and Pocatello areas only. The IDOC pays a lump sum of \$60,000 certifiable non-federal monies toward the case service costs encumbered in both areas.

The prison system of Idaho concentrates most of its offenders in the four institutions in the Treasure Valley requiring a focused approach from IDVR in the southwest region of the state. Dedicated counselors partially paid by the Idaho Department of Corrections are located with offices housing probation and parole officers. These six counselors also have offices or significant office hours located within the prison facilities for needed access to offenders prior to their release. The arrangement facilitates both quality and productivity on the part of IDVR counselors. An ongoing supportive partnership is reinforced from the co-location of staff and strengthened by the financial buy in from IDOC.

In both the northern and eastern part of the state, there are fewer residential facilities for imprisoned offenders. In the case of the northern part of the state, two facilities are located there and most offenders, if released from one of the facilities, are likely to relocate in the Treasure Valley. Consequently our counselors in the Treasure Valley tend to pick up clients from these

facilities located in other parts of the state. On those occasions when offenders are released and remain in the northern or the eastern portion of the state, referrals are generally made to IDVR from Correction's personnel and these offenders begin an open case with the local counselors. This means all the typical services provided to the general population are also provided to the corrections clients in the offices outside of the Treasure Valley.

Due to the rural nature of Idaho and the increased travel time associated with serving the School/Work (transition) population, additional resources are necessary in certain areas of the state to ensure the needs are met. In collaboration with Special Education and IDEA, as well as federal initiatives, the Division has developed cooperative agreements with school districts in various areas throughout the state to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to students with disabilities to prepare these individuals for transition to work. A designated VR counselor and staff member are assigned to a consortium affiliated facility to better serve clients in the respective areas. The school districts will pay a total of \$182,337 in certifiable non-federal monies to IDVR to be used expressly for allowable costs incurred by IDVR in the implementation of the cooperative agreement. All parties have agreed to and signed the memoranda agreement. The memoranda cover the following areas of the state:

- Region I – Coeur d'Alene – Two Projects
- Region II – Lewiston – One Project
- Region III – Boise East – Five Projects
- Region IV – Twin Falls - One Project
- Region V – Pocatello - Two Projects
- Region VI – Idaho Falls - One Project

It is worth contrasting the services in the regions of the state covered by the MOUs versus those not covered. The majority of the state high schools are covered by the transition agreements in the state. Those not covered by the approach tend to be smaller school districts or out of the way communities, although this isn't always true. First of all, any individual school district might participate in the arrangement. IDVR counselors are located or reside in high schools participating in the project. This provides an easy access to the transition age students eligible for IDVR services. The office space, phones and utilities are provided by the various schools where our counselors are located. These counselors carry a full caseload of transition students and are not dedicated to the general population eligible for IDVR services. The counselors keep the students on the caseload until they are closed by a successful rehabilitation or from failure to successfully complete the rehabilitation process. An important aspect of this agreement that is not feasible for a general counselor is the creation of a close working relationship with school personnel, more timely referrals, better support throughout the rehabilitation process, easy access to pertinent school staff, and the expertise that comes with specialization. The arrangement has proved important in developing an excellent working relationship between IDVR staff and school districts across the state.

In school districts not covered by the inter agency agreements, students are referred by school counselors, special education teachers, or by word of mouth to IDVR. In such cases all of the normal and appropriate activities and services are provided by the DSU. In these regions of the

state the counselor carries a general caseload with some transition age students. There is no service offered under the MOUs not also made available by the counselors providing services in the areas not covered by the MOUs. One difference however, must be mentioned. The counselors with full time caseloads of transition age youth typically become experts in providing services to this specialized caseload. At one time our agency believed this caseload would not be as productive as general caseload counselors, but the notion was proved wrong by several of the transition specialist counselors in recent years.

Individuals with mental health issues have been historically underserved in Idaho. To ensure that the needs of this population are adequately met, the Division has developed an Interagency Agreement with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Behavioral Health, Adult Mental Health to provide vocational rehabilitation services to Idahoans experiencing severe and persistent mental illness who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. A designated VR counselor and staff member are assigned to a consortium affiliated facility to better serve clients in the respective areas. The Department of Health and Welfare pays IDVR \$196,730 in certifiable non-federal monies for services executed under this Interagency Agreement. Both parties have agreed to and signed the memorandum. This Interagency Agreement covers the following areas only:

- Region I – Coeur d’Alene
- Region II – Lewiston
- Region V – Pocatello
- Region VI – Idaho Falls
- Region VII – Caldwell
- Region VIII – Boise West

Idaho is presently developing a system of mental health courts modeled after drug courts for those with persistent and severe mental illness (SPMI) disabilities. So far all of the mental health courts are located in geographic areas covered by our inter agency agreements. The new system in conjunction with our counselor’s efforts is proving useful in the rehabilitation process for consumers for whom success is most elusive.

In the regions of the state not covered by the interagency agreements SPMI consumers meet with general case load counselors and begin the normal rehabilitation process from application, to eligibility, plan development, service provision, placement, and eventual closure. In such cases the consumer is provided all the normal individualized services, however, is not able to access the counselors with the greatest expertise and specialization for MI. Additionally, the specialized counselors have developed a close working relationship with their respective regional mental health providers which encourages more timely referrals and better support through out the rehabilitation process. It is noteworthy that one of our main population areas of Twin Falls does not have an inter-agency agreement between mental health and IDVR

Special program assessments are conducted to assess the service impact on this population. Ongoing monitoring is accomplished by the Field Services Chief.

The following statements are included in the MOAs referenced in this attachment 4.7(b)(3) specifying that only certifiable non-federal monies will be transferred to IDVR: (See exhibit to State Plan)

School-Work MOA:

“School District agrees to transfer to IDVR \$15,600 for SFY 2007, upon receipt of appropriate billing, of certifiable non-federal monies which IDVR shall use to match available federal monies appropriated under the Rehabilitation Act. These monies will be used expressly for allowable cost incurred by IDVR in the furtherance of this cooperative agreement.” (This is a sample of verbiage utilized in all School/Work memoranda).

Mental Health MOA:

“H&W Behavioral Health Agrees to transfer to IDVR, upon receipt of an appropriate billing, \$196,730 of certifiable non-federal monies that IDVR will use to match federal monies appropriated under the Rehabilitation Act to be used expressly for allowable costs incurred in the discharge of this Agreement”.

Corrections MOA:

“IDOC agrees to transfer to IDVR, upon receipt of appropriate billing, \$60,000 certifiable non-federal monies that IDVR may use when available to match federal monies”.

Attachment 4.8(b)(1), (2), (3) and (4):

4.8 COOPERATION, COLLABORATION, AND COORDINATION

In 2005, Governor Kempthorne consolidated six former workforce investment areas into two. The Workforce Development Council is now the sole workforce investment board in the state to oversee a statewide regional planning area. This requires the Council to exercise special responsibility for development and oversight of the state's workforce development infrastructure and program. As a result of this consolidation, there is a single memorandum of understanding (MOU) that includes all Workforce Investment System partners. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the framework for operation of the One Stop system in a manner that maximizes services to system customers while making efficient use of public resources.

The following statement from the Agreement summarizes the intent and purpose of this statewide partnership:

“This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is entered into in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration by the Workforce Development Council, hereafter referred to as "the WDC" and the One Stop delivery system signatory partners, hereafter referred to as "the One Stop partners" or “partners” to describe how their various funding streams and resources will be utilized to better serve their mutual customers, both job seekers and employers, through an integrated system of service delivery operated at comprehensive sites known as *IdahoWorks* Career Centers and satellite sites, called *IdahoWorks* Career Connection sites. It is understood that the development and implementation of these Centers will require mutual trust and teamwork among the One Stop partnering agencies and the WDC, working together to accomplish the shared goals.”

4.8(b)(1) COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND ENTITIES

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) and the following entities have entered into formal agreements, which outline the specific activities expected of each partner. The agreements outline goals, planning processes, information sharing and confidentiality, technology, continuous improvement and accountability, service delivery support, cost sharing, annual action plans, duration, amendments, termination/conflict resolution. These entities include:

CAP - Idaho Client Assistance Project

This Agreement outlines the interaction between IDVR staff and CAP staff for the improvement of services to people with disabilities in Idaho served under the VR program.

Department of Health & Welfare – Division of Health – Idaho Children’s Special Health Program

The Idaho Children’s Special Health Program was formally known as Cripple Children’s Services with the Shriners’ Hospitals. The Agreement facilitates the referral of children ages 16 to 18 with significant disabilities to the IDVR program. It indicates we will work together to ensure appropriate transition to adult life to eligible youth. It further agrees that those needed and allowable services not covered by the existence of comparable benefits or other resources (as defined by the Act’s implementing regulations) will be covered by IDVR.

Idaho Industrial Commission

This Agreement outlines the relationship between IDVR and the Industrial Commission with regard to persons injured on the job who may also have other non-work related injuries. The Industrial Commission will be the lead agency for injured workers in Idaho and will refer them to IDVR when they are unable to return to previous or similar employment due to the work related injury.

Idaho Health & Welfare, Division of Behavioral Health, Adult Mental Health (Yearly updated Agreement)

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Division of Behavioral Health, Adult Mental Health enter into this Agreement for the express purpose of better serving Idahoans experiencing severe and persistent mental illness. A team approach will be used to ensure that the Idahoans served by this Agreement will benefit as to remaining de-institutionalized and successfully integrated into their respective communities from a psychological, psychosocial, and employment perspective. Those consumers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed not eligible for this program will be referred to the general IDVR program. Those consumers who have a severe and persistent mental illness deemed ineligible for this program or IDVR services will be referred to appropriate resources for assistance.

Tribal VR – (Nez Perce Tribe) (Coeur d’Alene Tribe)

The intent of these Agreements is to develop and implement a cooperative system for providing vocational rehabilitation services to eligible American Indians with disabilities and to promote and enhance to the greatest extent possible vocational rehabilitation services like that of those provided by the State of Idaho. The IDVR has the basic responsibility to provide rehabilitation services to all eligible individuals of Idaho. The Nez Perce Tribe as well as the Coeur d’Alene Tribe, through a Federal Section 121 grant, will work cooperatively with IDVR.

Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor /Data Sharing

This Agreement provides for disclosure of employment security information by the Idaho Department of Labor to IDVR for the purpose of evaluating participants’ acquisition and retention of employment and earnings. The Agreement also enables IDVR to meet

federal reporting requirements under Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended by Title IV of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998.

State Use Contracting Programs

The State of Idaho has a 1973 statute referred to as the “Use Law”. A council appointed by the governor facilitates the sale of goods and services from thirteen (13) Community Rehabilitation “Not for Profit” Programs. A cooperative agreement is not necessary.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

IDVR does not have contracts with Community Rehabilitation Programs as services through these entities are provided on a fee for service basis.

Idaho Department of Corrections (IDOC)

This Agreement established the guidelines to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to adult, felony clients/offenders both in an IDOC institution and in the community.

Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections (IDJC)

This Agreement established the guidelines to provide comprehensive vocational rehabilitation services to juvenile offenders, both in an IDJC institution and in the community.

4.8(b)(2) COORDINATION WITH EDUCATION OFFICIALS

Universities, Colleges and Professional Technical Programs in Idaho under the State Board of Education

These Agreements provide coordination of services between IDVR and the universities and colleges in Idaho, so that students with disabilities can succeed in an environment of higher education as outlined in CFR361.22.

The Cooperative Agreements with Colleges and Universities outline information regarding consultation and technical assistance, roles, responsibilities, including financial responsibilities of each, and procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need services.

Idaho Department of Education – Secondary Transition

This Agreement deals with our mutual definition of secondary transition and the cooperative delivery of services to transitioning students with disabilities. It outlines the provision of services required from local school districts, IDVR and Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, roles and responsibilities of each agency including financial responsibilities, provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services.

The parties enter into these agreements solely to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from K-12 public education into adult life. This transition to adult life may

involve any or all of the following goal oriented activities: post-secondary education, training and job placement, direct placement into appropriate employment (to include supported employment if required), consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities, advocacy and any other activities that are relevant to the student and within the scope of the IDVR mission and role.

This Agreement with the Idaho Department of Education and education officials ensures a coordinated, comprehensive system focusing on youth with disabilities as they transition from secondary school to post-school activities, promoting post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, and community participation emphasizing a team approach to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from public education into employment. Roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for services are outlined as well. This Agreement also includes referrals of students with disabilities (e.g. physical, medical) who are not eligible for special education services, and students who have a 504 Plan (Rehabilitation Act of 1973), to IDVR for determination of eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services.

This Agreement outlines the local education agency responsibility for the purchase of assistive technology equipment that is required for educational purposes. The Agreement also outlines IDVR responsibility for the purchase of any assistive technology device of equipment that may be necessary for the student's eventual employment. The Agreement also provides a protocol for discounting the cost of equipment purchased by the school for repurchase by IDVR to be utilized in an employment program.

Additionally, IDVR will accept referrals within 2 years prior to the student exiting high school (or earlier if appropriate), determine eligibility and collaboratively, with input from the students' Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team, develop Individual Plans for Employment (IPEs).

School-Work Transition Cooperative Agreements

IDVR has entered into twelve consortium assignments that span a myriad of school districts in both rural and metropolitan areas. While these projects represent a substantial segment of the agency's services to the transitional population, the Agreement referenced above relates to services in all districts across the state. The Agency's consortium projects include:

- Panhandle Consortium (Region I)
- Coeur d'Alene/Post Falls School-Work (Region I)
- Lewiston School-Work (Region II)
- Local Consortium of Southern Idaho School Districts (Region IV)
- Southern Counties Consortium of Schools (Region V)

- Pocatello School-Work (Region V)
- Greater Opportunities to Achieve Life Skills Consortium School Districts (Region VI)
- Canyon, Owyhee and Gem School Districts (Region III)
- Nampa/Vallivue School District (Region III)
- Meridian Joint School District #2 (Region III)
- Boise School-Work (Region III)
- Mt. View School-Work (Region III)

IDVR also has individual cooperative agreements with other educational entities throughout the state. The goal of these cooperative agreements is to provide the necessary coordination of services at a local level, which will assist eligible individuals who have disabilities in an educational environment. These agreements are specific in terms of program and financial responsibilities of each party and include:

Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition

IDVR continues to be involved in the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition with the purpose of ensuring that youth with disabilities experience a collaborative, comprehensive system that facilitates a smooth transition from secondary school to adult life. The goal of this group is to provide and promote a common conceptual framework that leads to opportunities for youth with disabilities in community living, recreation, continued education, and employment. Interagency cooperative planning, information sharing, and the collaborative use of resources will help accomplish our mission at the state and local level.

Idaho School for the Deaf & the Blind (ISDB)

This Agreement establishes guidelines to facilitate the referral of ISDB students to IDVR and to coordinate the provision of services when students are mutual clients of both agencies.

4.8(b)(3) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS WITH PRIVATE NON-PROFIT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICE PROVIDERS.

IDVR does not establish cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers as we purchase services on a fee-for-service basis.

IDVR has implemented two reimbursement methods with private, non-profit Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP). These include contracts for services provided on an incremental basis (payments following the provision of selected services) as well as fee-for-service.

IDVR and the two statewide CRP associations continue to conduct annual trainings and workshops, the main purpose of which is to solidify and improve collaborative relationships for the enhancement of service delivery to individuals with disabilities.

The major areas of focus within the workshops include:

1. Social Security Work Incentives
2. Contract issues as well as fee-for-service reimbursement issues
3. Methods to improve the partnerships through open communication
4. Strategies to improve provider program outcomes

All new providers of service for IDVR consumers must go through a certification and approval process. The Chief of Field Services reviews the qualifications of the vendors providing services to IDVR consumers in order to assure the quality of these services, as well as the safety of consumers. Vendors are certified through either the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) or Rehabilitation Services Accreditation System (RSAS).

IDVR policy assures that applicants and eligible individuals exercise choice of service providers. Each region throughout the state provides a comprehensive list of CRP services and expertise available, which enables the consumer to make an informed choice in the selection of an appropriate vendor.

4.8(b)(4) EVIDENCE OF COLLABORATION REGARDING SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES AND EXTENDED SERVICES

IDVR is committed to the advancement of opportunities for Idaho citizens with disabilities including those with the most significant disabilities to be employed and to become independent in the least restrictive and most integrated environments. IDVR has established and continues to maintain strong working relationships with pertinent state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services throughout the state.

As of July 1, 2004, the Idaho Legislature changed the responsibility for the distribution of state only funding for Work Services/Supported Employment long-term support from the Department of Health and Welfare to IDVR. The intent of this change was to enhance the effectiveness of the program accountability. IDVR convened a committee that developed a management strategy for the program as well as accountability measures to ensure that funding would be appropriately utilized and more individuals with the most significant disabilities would receive the support they need to be successful. IDVR hired two individuals to manage this program statewide under the direction of the IDVR Administrator.

IDVR continues to be successful in maximizing the Federal Supported Employment allocation by collaborating with other agencies and organizations to ensure that available resources are identified and utilized in order to maximize the impact of the services for all individuals with the most significant disabilities requiring long-term community supported employment. Included within this collaboration are Medicaid services provided under the Home and Community Based Services Waiver, as well as services provided through the statewide IDVR consortia with the State Regional Mental Health programs.

Additionally, the Agency is striving to decrease the number of individuals on the waiting list for funding for long-term community supported employment services. A stronger focus on community-based integrated employment rather than sheltered employment has been part of an on-going discussion with community partners and other interested parties in order to develop a workable strategy.

IDVR counselors work closely with the two staff involved with the State Work Services/Supported Employment program to ensure that eligible individuals are referred and placed on the waiting list to receive long-term community supported employment funding when appropriate. IDVR counselors also assist individuals who desire to move from a sheltered work environment into competitive and community-based supported employment when appropriate.

Attachment 4.10

COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Data System

Collection and analysis of data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development consistent with the provisions of 34 CFR 361.18 (a) includes the following activities:

- Analysis of current and future staffing needs continues through periodic reviews of turnover rates, promotions and transfers. Anticipatory staffing analysis is ongoing.
- During FFY 2006, the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) turnover rate for Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRCs) was 18.1%. The overall turnover rate for all Vocational Rehabilitation staff was 17.3%. It is projected over the next five (5) years that the turnover rate for VRCs will be between 15% and 20%.
- In the next five (5) years, three (3) out of IDVR's nine (9) Regional Managers will likely retire. Steps have been taken to provide leadership opportunities to VRCs interested in management. The position of Assistant Regional Manager is one such position that offers management experience.
- IDVR has a continuing need for increased numbers of vocational rehabilitation staff. The Division attempted to secure these additional positions this year through the Idaho Legislature, but was unsuccessful. Currently, IDVR does not have authority or additional funds from the State legislature to increase the number of positions within the agency.
- Idaho continues to be one of the fastest growing states in the nation.
- The agency has determined that a ratio of one (1) counselor for every 20,000 people in the state would be an ideal staffing ratio. The population of Idaho is approximately 1.6 million people, thus a minimum of eighty (80) counselors over the next five years would be required to meet this ratio. IDVR currently has 72 counselors, thus an additional 8 counselors are needed.
- Tracking, monitoring and reporting of individual academic preparation, certification pursuits and Continuing Education for VRCs is regularly maintained by IDVR
- IDVR also tracks, monitors, and reports individual training and development of other Vocational Rehabilitation staff.
- An annual assessment of training needs is conducted to establish priorities and develop training opportunities to meet those needs.
- IDVR has one hundred and forty-eight (148) total full time employees; one hundred and twenty-eight (128) of these are Field Staff that comprise nine (9) Regional Managers; seventy-one (71) VRCs; and forty-eight (47) Office Services Personnel. IDVR also has one (1) Migrant Service Coordinator serving under the MSFW grant and one (1) Employment Developer position.
- The ratio of VRCs to individuals served is 1:181. An optimal caseload size is approximately one hundred and twenty-five (125). IDVR is currently exploring avenues to ensure client needs are met despite limitations on the numbers of VRCs that can

currently be hired. IDVR will continue to work through the 2008 Idaho Legislature process to secure additional rehabilitation staff.

Recruitment and Retention

Plan to address current and projected needs for qualified personnel include the following activities:

- IDVR maintains periodic contact with regional universities and gathers information about the numbers of individuals who will be graduating from rehabilitation programs. Currently, the numbers are: Portland State University (13), Western Washington University (17), Utah State University (30), University of Idaho (7), and Western Oregon University (12). University of Idaho has over 30 students enrolled in the Graduate Program.
- Periodic site visits to the University of Idaho occur to meet with students and faculty for establishing relationships and initiating recruitment activities with current graduate students.
- IDVR provides feedback to the Rehabilitation Counseling Coordinator at the University of Idaho on existing and future staffing needs, including individuals with disabilities and from minority backgrounds for capacity building. IDVR critiques program content and advises Coordinator on areas needing attention for successful placement of graduates within the Division.
- Periodic contact is made with Western Washington University, Utah State University, University of Idaho, Western Oregon University, Portland State University, University of North Texas, University of Northern Colorado at Greeley, San Diego State University, University of Wisconsin/Stout, and Montana State University at Billings. The Division has developed a process whereby each of the nine (9) Regional Managers and the IDVR Administrator is assigned to different universities that have a Masters Level Rehabilitation Program for recruiting purposes. Each will maintain ongoing relationships to promote communication concerning vacancy announcements and to develop and maintain a pool of qualified VRC applicants. They will stay in contact with key personnel at each university, i.e., Department Head and Internship Coordinator.
- IDVR continues to face challenges in recruiting qualified applicants. This past year IDVR requested and received additional funding to increase the starting wage of VRCs. Despite the increase, the entry-level wage for VRCs is lower than comparable state and private positions.
- All Regional Managers and Central Office Management complete recruitment activities. Development of a recruitment plan continues to be a priority, which will assess the effectiveness of the Division's new strategies.
- Professional organizations such as the local chapter and the national chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association assist in promoting agency recruiting efforts.
- IDVR participates in Career Fairs to encourage and seek out individuals from diverse backgrounds including individuals with disabilities and from minority backgrounds.

- IDVR conducts exit interviews with staff, when possible, to determine whether there are areas of concern affecting staff retention that need to be addressed.

Personnel Standards

- Establishment and maintenance of personnel standards includes the following activities:
- The standards established by IDVR for academic requirements of VRCs, Regional Managers, and Field Services Management staff include graduation from an accredited university with a Master's Degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and/or a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) designation obtained by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).
- Due to the limited pool of recruits for the VRC position we will consider hiring an individual who does not have their Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or meet the CRC Certification. Before an individual is hired they agree to obtain their Master's in Rehabilitation or be eligible for the CRC Certification within five years of their hire date.
- If we were to hire an individual that does not meet the standards, importance is placed on experience and special skills, i.e., Spanish speaking, sign language proficient, extensive employment history that encompasses specialty areas such as Corrections, School Work Transition, etc.
- IDVR sets CSPD goals with each individual counselor and for those counselors who do not meet CSPD. Progress is monitored semi-annually.
- There are currently fifty-four (54) VRCs who meet the standard and seventeen (17) who do not meet the standard.
- IDVR initiated a policy that allows counselors who are currently employed but do not currently meet the certification standards to complete the credential requirement within five years. If the VRC fails to meet the standards in the allotted time frame, the individual is re-classified to a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist designation. In that capacity, the individual is restricted in his/her professional latitude to approve eligibilities, IPEs and case closures. These rights will be re-instated once the individual achieves the required credentials.
- The designation of CRC is required for all VR counselors, regional managers, field services managers, bureau chief position, employment developer, planning and evaluation manager, and human resources manager.
- Regional Managers conduct bi-annual assessments of progress towards meeting the CSPD timelines and report outcomes to the HR Manager.
- Remaining IDVR staff positions, not specifically named in this section, are required to meet the State of Idaho minimum standards set for each position description.
- IDVR provides continued counseling to employees (VRC) on Division expectations for meeting the requirements as defined by Federal regulations of a Qualified Rehabilitation Professional (QRP) and formalized plans for achieving the goal.
- IDVR provides financial support through funding from the Basic Support and In-Service Training Grants for coursework to support counselor objectives in meeting CSPD requirements. In FFY 2006, \$16,796.96 was spent to support this effort.

Staff Development

Activities for staff development to ensure all personnel are receiving appropriate and adequate training include the following:

- Tracking, monitoring and reporting individual training and development of all Vocational Rehabilitation staff.
- Annual assessment of training needs conducted to establish priorities and develop programs to meet those needs in compliance with CSPD requirement. Identified areas of need include co-occurring disorders, time management, offender training, supervisory skills, assistive technology, caseload management, critical case questioning, and ethics.
- At the annual in-service topics were provided in the area of job placement, assistive technology, assessment, substance abuse, stress management, employment strategies with deaf and hard of hearing, communicable diseases, and many more.
- Throughout the year training requests are approved for individual staff to attend training on areas of interest or need. Topics have included; co-occurring disorders, self-employment, psychiatric disabilities with adult and juvenile offenders, working with clients with history of methamphetamines use, Hispanic Youth Symposium, and school/work transition training, etc.
- Participation in extensive training for enhancing skills for software application.
- Management development training for VRCs and other staff members to enhance skills for current jobs or future advancement opportunities. Participation in Orientation to Leadership and Emerging Leaders training by Region X CCER Leadership Institute and management and supervisory skill development provided by the Idaho Division of Human Resources.
- Identifying and/or developing staff in particular subject matters to develop potential trainers or facilitators within IDVR for staff training. Areas developed are Caseload Management and Critical Case Questioning. Training topics being explored and/or developed include; SSA/SSI/SSDI, Adult/Juvenile Corrections, School-Work Transition, Mental Health and Pure State Kidney.
- IDVR transitioned support staff to a paraprofessional status of Vocational Rehabilitation Assistants (VRA) effective July 1, 2006. During the first year of this transition a comprehensive training program was developed to ensure these personnel have the necessary competencies to perform their new job duties.
- For all new VRA employees they will be required to take four courses of study including; Disability History, Developing Collaborative Relationships, Sticky Situations, and Developing Cultural Competence within the first year of employment.

Communication with Diverse Populations

Activities to ensure employment of personnel who are trained to communicate in special languages are as follows:

- Continued participation in state/regional conferences on Hispanic culture and issues.
- Recruit and place candidates fluent in Spanish for specific areas of the State to serve the needs of the Hispanic community.
- Since Idaho has a separate entity that addresses issues related to low vision and blindness, IDVR does not provide specific training to its staff in Braille.
- Training is provided in the area of deaf and hard of hearing as needed.

Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

- A Regional Manager has been assigned as an active member of the Idaho Interagency Council on Secondary Transition, which promotes interagency cooperative planning, information sharing, and the collaborative use of resources at the state and local level. This Council works to ensure that training needs are adequately identified and then addressed through shared training opportunities. These opportunities include Tools for Life: Secondary Transition and Technology. Jacquie Hyatt, Specialist for the Idaho Department of Education Bureau of Special Populations visits approximately five schools each year and invites a VRC to conduct joint trainings with school district personnel, parents, and students with disabilities. Additional activities include VRC attendance at statewide school district transition fairs where they speak with school personnel, parents, and students with disabilities.
- IDVR has actively participated with the Department of Education, Special Education, in the preparation of a Transition Capacity Building Initiative from OSERS. If the grant is awarded, IDVR and Department of Education, Special Education will be working together to carry out activities specified in the grant.

Attachment 4.11

EVALUATION AND REPORT OF PROGRESS IN ACHIEVING IDENTIFIED GOALS AND PRIORTIES AND USE OF TITLE 1 FUNDS FOR THE INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE IN CARRYING OUT THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Attachment 4.11(a): COMPREHENSIVE STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

In response to the requirements of Section 101.15 (a) of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR), in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), draws from many sources to assess thoroughly the needs of Idahoans with disabilities. The Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment will continue to be conducted on a triennial basis and will include case reviews, consumer satisfaction surveys, focus groups of people with disabilities, Town Meetings conducted annually in major metropolitan areas of the state, as well as information gathered from community rehabilitation programs statewide. Additionally, counselors assigned to specialized populations (transition, corrections, mental health, migrant and seasonal farm workers, American Indians, as well as Hispanics) elicit input not only from the client population but from others who provide services to these populations including input from various state boards and groups focused on the needs of people with disabilities.

Other facets of IDVR's Needs Assessment include:

1. A Strategic Planning process involving a rolling three-year plan which is updated annually. The strategic plan has become an important tool in the decision making process that affects the day-to-day operations of IDVR. Input is solicited from IDVR staff, the CAP, the SRC, and the SILC. Primary focus areas include:
 - Service delivery with an emphasis on continued improvement in the quality of service delivery
 - Staff Development
 - Utilization of Information Technology
 - Strengthened partnerships with shareholders
 - Enhanced revenue opportunities for all VR programs
2. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Survey:
The survey was designed to evaluate the degree to which IDVR is addressing the rehabilitation needs of the demographic populations encompassed within this state. Groups targeted for their input and statewide representation included:
 - Client Assistance Program (CAP)
 - A variety of specific disability advocacy organizations, e.g. Parents Unlimited, NAMI

- Statewide transition partners
- Consumers
- State Mental Health Council and mental health providers
- State Independent Living Council
- State Rehabilitation Council
- Developmental Disability Council
- Task Force on the ADA
- Adult Corrections
- Juvenile Corrections
- WIA partners
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Idaho Migrant Council
- American Indian Tribal representatives and 121 projects
- Idaho Inclusiveness coalition
- IDVR staff
- Community Rehabilitations Programs

A total of 165 responses were recorded. In addition, responses were recorded from the wide spectrum of sources that were tapped throughout the state including focus groups of people with disabilities, town meetings, responses procured from community rehabilitation programs, counselors assigned to specialized populations, as well as various state boards and groups focused on the needs of people with disabilities. Five major themes were identified that are capable of being addressed within the purview of IDVR.

Those themes were:

1. **Service Delivery** - While a majority of the respondents expressed satisfaction with IDVR services provided across the state, there were still some demographic pockets of concern where the provision of services could be enhanced. Areas targeted for improvement included a need for stronger up front vocational guidance and counseling, effective and thorough support for job searching, and more thorough discussion regarding SSA work incentives in order to alleviate the fear of losing SSA benefits.
2. **Transitioning Students** - The responses received reflected issues beyond the scope of VR services alone, including the lack of effective family support, inefficient school sponsored work experiences, a disconnect within the smaller communities regarding the inherent value of youth who are attempting to transition into the world of work, as well as a stronger network and coordination among agencies designed to provide the essential support required to ensure the acquisition of meaningful employment that will result in self-sufficiency.
3. **Staff Development**- A number of areas outlining rehabilitation needs suggest that additional training for the counseling staff should be implemented. The areas identified include SSA work incentives, a need to be more proactive in regards to a self-employment strategy for appropriate clients, and a better understanding of mental health and substance abuse issues.

4. **SSA Work Incentives** - There were a myriad of responses outlining the need to provide comprehensive information regarding SSA work incentives in order to allay the fear of losing benefits and take advantage of any work incentives.
5. **Supported Employment Services** - The following comments were recorded in regard to this topic: A stronger focus on community based, integrated employment rather than sheltered employment (work services), increased long-term funding for supported employment, and a reduction of the waiting list for funding of supported services.

Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including Supported Employment

IDVR is not operating under an order of selection and is able to serve all eligible Idahoans. At the end of FFY2006, 97 % of all cases open during the year were coded as either significantly disabled (SD) or most significantly disabled (MSD). No one was closed in extended employment in a non-integrated setting.

The Comprehensive Needs Assessment reinforced the need for additional State only funds designated for long-term support. There is a strong consensus among shareholders regarding the need to work closely with IDVR to craft a solution to the long-term support funding shortfall.

Additionally, a stronger focus on community based employment outcomes rather than sheltered workshop (extended employment) has been identified as a need for this population.

It should be noted that all clients served in supported employment meet the classification of either SD or MSD. IDVR monitors the proper coding of SD and MSD through its on-going case review process.

Through representation on the SILC, IDVR provides significant input into the development of the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The SILC conducted a series of focus Groups across the state to gather input on the needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly those with the most significant disabilities. IDVR incorporated the results of these focus groups into its Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

Service Needs of Individuals with Disabilities who are Minorities

IDVR addresses services to minority consumers through the hiring of a culturally diverse staff, by providing cultural diversity training to IDVR staff, by hiring bi-lingual vocational counselors to ingress the Hispanic population, and by collaborating with the two Section 121 Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation (TVR) grantees.

The most recent census data indicates that Idaho's two largest minority groups include: Hispanics at 9.1% of the state's population and American Indians are at 1.4% of the state's population. In FFY 2006, Hispanics comprised 8.6 % of IDVR clients served. American Indians comprised 2.6 % of IDVR clients served. Historically, particular areas of the state with higher Hispanic populations have been underserved because of the unique barriers related to the culture, which make it difficult to attract participation from that population.

It is important to note that efforts were undertaken to solicit responses from the Hispanic population in regard to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment. In reality, because of the cultural disconnect between this population and government programs, the rate of response was marginal. However, this disadvantage was partially mitigated by the bi-lingual counselors serving this population who were able to elicit some meaningful responses.

Individuals with Disabilities who have been Unserved or Underserved

Historically, transitional students in Idaho have experienced significant barriers when exiting the school system and entering the world of work. The following barriers have been identified:

- More vocational training at the high school level needed (lack of work skills)
- Knowledge of procedural details related to scholarships, applications (employment or school), resumes, etc.
- Access to community resources difficult
- Family support/attitudes
- Limited job opportunities in small communities
- Fear of losing SSA benefits
- Lack of work ethics and experience
- Substance abuse issues
- Transportation

IDVR has identified the transitional population as a major focus area in its current State Plan. The barriers noted above will continue to be addressed by IDVR and partners as outlined in Goal #2 of the State Plan.

Individuals with Disabilities Served through Other Components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System

IDVR is an active participant in the Statewide Workforce Investment System. Each region of the state has established a regular schedule of participation within each One Stop Center. In one particular region the VR counselor is permanently housed within the One Stop Center.

IDVR continues to provide training and information to One Stop Center partners on disability related issues, thus increasing the willingness and ability of all partners to serve individuals with disabilities.

The comprehensive needs assessment identified two areas of concern with regard to individuals with disabilities and the One Stop Centers. 1) A lack of familiarity with the needs of individuals with disabilities 2) difficulty navigating through the one stop system.

Assessment of the Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) within the State

IDVR maintains a CRP specialist who serves as a liaison with CRPs and is vested with the responsibility for insuring that services are delivered consistent with IDVR standards.

There are thirty four Community Rehabilitation Programs in Idaho. Twelve of them belong to a traditional association called the Idaho Association of Community Rehabilitation Programs (IACRP) and twenty two belong to Vocational Providers of Idaho (VPI).

The majority of the IACRP members are accredited by Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). The remainder of the CRPs is accredited by Rehabilitation Services Accreditation System (RSAS).

IDVR monitors all CRPs to ensure that they are properly accredited before they are accepted as viable vendors. This monitoring is ongoing to ensure that the accreditation remains active.

Idaho is a predominantly rural state. In several of the rural areas there is very limited choice with regard to CRP vendors available. Currently, IDVR has established a round table discussion with interested stakeholders to address this particular need and strategies that would resolve the current deficit of service providers. It is anticipated that a negotiated solution will be reached during FFY 2008.

Attachment 4.11(b): ANNUAL ESTIMATE OF INDIVIDUALS TO BE SERVED AND COST OF SERVICES

The estimated number of all individuals who are eligible for services under this State Plan: 12,990

1. The estimated number of eligible individuals who will receive services on an IPE provided by:
 - a. Title I, Part B: 3200
 - b. Title VI, Part B: 160
 - c. IDVR is not in an order of selection.

2. The estimated cost of services:
 - a. Title I, Part B: \$9,053,400
 - b. Title VI, Part B: \$300,000

Attachment 4.11(c)(1): STATE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The goals and priorities for the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) are reviewed annually and revised as necessary based on input from a variety of sources including the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), Agency staff, State Independent Living Council (SILC), Client Advocacy Program (CAP), Tribal VR representatives, the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment, the Field Services Employee Council and the IDVR Management team.

The goals and priorities are developed using information from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under Section 107, first hand observation and experiences of the rehabilitation managers and field services employee council, input from organizations mentioned in the previous paragraph, and the expectations defined by federal standards and indicators. These goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by IDVR and the State Rehabilitation Council.

The goals and priorities identified for inclusion in this State Plan will be:

- Measurable
- Attainable
- Meaningful based upon the unique needs and circumstances of Idaho, keeping in mind the rural nature of this state and the limited resources available
- Consistent with IDVR's mission and principles
- Disseminated to staff and evaluated annually
- Consistent with federal standards and indicators

Goal #1- Service Delivery: IDVR will provide the services required to ensure that individuals with significant disabilities secure employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Comprehensive vocational guidance and counseling will be consistently provided during the development of the IPE. Case audits at closure and regional reviews will be used to monitor compliance with this goal. A minimum of 300 cases will be monitored for compliance during FFY2008.
- 1.2 IDVR will collaborate with the WIPA grant awardees housed under the auspices of the Idaho CAP program in order to identify individuals receiving SSA who could potentially benefit from the provision of PASS plans, identification of work incentives and assistance in negotiating the SSA system. This objective will be measured by the number of participants referred to the WIPA grant program. Since this is a new grant program, the total number of participants referred at the completion of FFY2008 will be used as a baseline from which to measure future increase or decrease of referrals.
- 1.3 IDVR counselors will encourage and support PASS plan development for individuals receiving SSA whenever appropriate, with a goal of 5 PASS plans written for FFY 2008.

Goal # 2- Transitioning Students: IDVR will partner with the Idaho Department of Education, Special Education, to create regional working groups that include the VR counselor, special education teachers and other pertinent participants to further the cooperation and collaboration of agencies providing services to transition age youths.

Objectives:

- 2.1 IDVR Field Services Chief, along with representatives from Special Education and other community agencies, will establish the framework for regional working groups throughout Idaho. These working groups will standardize the delivery of services within each region and encourage the sharing of resources. By the end of FFY2008, at least one region of the state will be identified as having agency and community participants committed and available to begin the formation of a functional working group. A minimum of one regional group will be established and functioning by the end of FFY2009.
- 2.2 Based upon the implementation of the working group prototype IDVR will exceed the documented School Work Transition rehabilitations in FFY2008 compared to year end FFY 2007 by 1%.

Goal #3-Staff Development: IDVR will continue to develop and employ qualified staff as defined by the guidelines of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD).

Objectives:

- 3.1 Identify and support counselors employed by IDVR in their efforts to meet the CSPD requirements within the 5-year timeframe in order to maximize the number of counselors with masters level credentials.
- 3.2 Provide staff pertinent training opportunities that enhance their rehabilitation knowledge and professional development.
- 3.3 Training will be provided to staff, based on the results of a regularly scheduled internal regional casework review process, to ensure that competencies are maintained.

Goal #4 Supported Employment (SE): IDVR will provide high quality Supported Employment (SE) services statewide to a greater number of eligible individuals.

Objectives:

- 4.1 IDVR will work with interested state and community partners to craft a strategy to increase the percentage of individuals in long-term community supported employment

versus sheltered employment (work services). This goal will be measured by an increase of 1% in community employment placements.

- 4.2 IDVR will document the need for state funding for long-term support services. This documentation will be used to support the request of an enhancement in state funding in the FFY2009

Attachment 4.11(c)(4): GOALS AND PLANS FOR DISTRIBUTION OF TITLE VI, PART B FUNDS

IDVR uses all funds received annually under Section 622 of the Act for the provision of Supported Employment (SE) services for eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities who require supported employment to become employed and who have selected SE as the appropriate employment strategy following a comprehensive assessment of rehabilitation career job needs. All of these funds are allotted as direct client service funds to all IDVR Regional Offices. Individuals receiving services under this funding are experiencing multiple issues that may include extended learning requirements, inappropriate job behavior, difficulties in interaction with the supervisor, coping with changes on the job such as job tasks, coworkers, supervisors as well as transportation issues.

Supported Employment services include situational assessment, job placement and job coaching, placement and follow-along, as well as transportation and other supportive services when justified.

Currently, the priorities for the strategy include the following:

1. A stronger focus on community based integrated employment rather than sheltered employment (work services)
2. Pursuit of increased long-term state funding for supported employment
3. Strive for a reduction of the waiting list for funding of long-term supported employment services

Attachment 4.11(d): STRATEGIES

The following strategies have been identified to support the needs identified in the FFY 2007 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment as described in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and the agency goals and priorities. These strategies will be implemented in order to achieve Agency goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

These strategies are subject to change due to the nature of the strategies and the continuous evolution of concerns related to disability issues in the state. The Agency continuously monitors these strategies based on current circumstances, striving to stay in tune with the needs of Idahoans with disabilities.

Attachment 4.11(d)(1)(A): EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT OF SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES AND DEVICES

Strategy 1: Assistive Technology Services and Devices

In January 2007, IDVR revised the Agency Field Services Policy Manual for the express purpose of standardizing service delivery statewide. The manual states:

“Rehabilitation technology services (assistive/adaptive technology) may be provided as compensatory strategies to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Rehabilitation technology services may be provided at any time in the rehabilitation process, including the assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs, extended evaluation, services provided under an IPE, and post employment services. Rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory, and other technological aids and devices are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits. If, however, comparable services or benefits exist under any other program and are available to the individual, IDVR must use those resources to meet in whole or part, the costs of the vocational rehabilitation services. (For further information, please review the series of comprehensive fact sheets provided by Idaho Assistive Technology Project located on the IDVR internet web site. There are also direct links to the Idaho Assistive Technology Project web site at that location)”.

In 2007, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project received a demonstration grant for the purpose of recycling and reutilization of durable medical equipment such as wheel chairs and scooters. IDVR has agreed to provide assistance in picking up equipment and transporting it to the various recycling centers that will be established throughout the state. VR staff can be utilized when the task of acquiring this equipment is compatible with the counselor’s travel plans on particular days.

IDVR will continue to focus upon efficient usage of rehabilitation technology enhancements as they become available on the market. This equipment will be utilized to overcome barriers that would otherwise impede the achievement of a desired vocational outcome.

Strategy 2: Expansion and Improvement of Services to Individuals with Disabilities

- IDVR will create a new review instrument to be used for internal casework audits that will identify current practices that do not meet Agency or federal standards as well as identify examples of “best case practice”. The Agency recognized a need to create a better evaluation tool as a direct outcome of the last Federal 107 review, which identified specific casework requirements that were not adequately addressed or documented.
- IDVR has developed a series of Critical Caseload Templates that each counselor is utilizing as a desk aid. These templates, along with ongoing Regional training, will ensure that staff is familiarized with a broad range of services and devices. The success of this strategy will be measured by client satisfaction surveys conducted at the closure of cases after the provision of an IPE, including outcomes that involved the acquisition of assistive technology.
- Collaborate with other state agencies and organizations to address disability related issues as they arise.
- IDVR staff will participate on regional or statewide transportation committees that are developed to expand or create options for public transportation and to represent the interests of Idahoans with disabilities.
- Actively support IDVR clients in their participation in Mental Health Court in communities where this program has been implemented
- Invite community rehabilitation partners to attend relevant trainings sponsored by IDVR, including the annual in-service training when appropriate.
- Extend invitations to the Tribal VR representative to attend quarterly IDVR management meeting and staff trainings.

Attachment 4.11(d)(1)(B): OUTREACH TO SERVE THE MOST SIGNIFICANTLY DISABLED WHO ARE MINORITIES OR UNSERVED OR UNDERSERVED

Strategy 1:

The triennial needs assessment recently conducted specifically identified as underserved, individuals requiring long-term supportive employment services. A major emphasis is being undertaken as evidenced by the agency’s stipulated intent identified in goal #4 (see section 4.11(c) (1)) to recruit other organizations and state agencies with similar objectives to advocate for help in securing additional resources. These resources will be used to increase the percent of individuals participating in community based, integrated, supported employment.

Strategy 2:

Because of the homogeneity of Idaho’s population base, there are very few minorities. Overall, the population of Idaho is being served equitably across the state. The primary minority and underserved population is the Hispanic population, many of whom enter the state on a seasonal

basis to work in agriculture. IDVR will continue to outreach and serve the Migrant population with a five year grant designed to increase community awareness of this population and identify community resources available as comparable benefits. In order to actively encourage participation by potential clients, IDVR will also address family issues which could potentially conflict with the individual's capacity to participate in an IPE or pursue and maintain successful employment. This grant is currently in its fourth year and will continue to be measured by performance objectives established for the final two years on an incremental basis. This particular demographic population experiences a large number of individuals with the most significant disabilities based upon the labor intensive nature of the work and other occupational hazards related to seasonal and migratory farm work as well as cultural and education barriers.

Strategy 3:

Another underserved population is the American Indians. In Idaho, there are currently two Section 121 Vocational Rehabilitation projects with another (Bannock/Shoshone) in the process of reapplication. General IDVR counselors meet minimally on a monthly basis with the two projects mentioned above. In addition, a general IDVR counselor maintains monthly contact with the Bannock/Shoshone tribal population. IDVR general counselors will open tribal cases periodically when requested by an individual or a project representative.

Attachment 4.11(d)(1)(C): DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAMS (CRPs)

Strategy 1

It has been identified in the Triennial Needs Assessment that there are particular rural areas of the state in which adequate Community Rehabilitation Program coverage is not available. In order to rectify this deficit, the agency has initiated a round table discussion with interested stakeholders to address this particular need and strategies intended to resolve the current deficit of service providers in some rural areas of the state.

Strategy 2:

In Idaho, the CRP programs function as independent vendors structured on a fee for service basis. In order to assure the highest quality service outcome to Agency clientele, each vendor must be certified by one of two National Certification entities. The first is the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). The second is the Rehabilitation Services Accreditation System (RSAS).

Strategy 3:

A pilot project was developed in 2005 to provide an installment payment incentive for participating CRPs rather than the traditional method of fee-for-service. The intent is to increase efficiency in service delivery and encourage a positive employment outcome for the client. The payments for services are based upon certain milestones being achieved in the job search process, with the greatest financial reward to the CRP coming at the time of successful closure.

The cost to the agency remains neutral when compared to fee-for –service but the emphasis has been shifted for the CRPs to a successful employment outcome rather than merely the provision of vocational services. To date, the program is still in pilot status with the prospect of expansion into the Northern region. It is anticipated that this service delivery payment option will be expanded statewide within the next three years as more CRPs are able to financially accommodate the initial start up of an incremental payment schedule. Currently, there are two CRPs participating with several more expressing an interest. Overall, the outcomes have met expectations by expediting the outcomes in a more efficient manner than the traditional hourly fee for service.

Attachment 4.11(d)(1)(D): IMPROVEMENT OF THE STATE’S FEDERAL EVALUATION STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategy:

In FFY2006, IDVR met or exceeded all the federal Standards and Indicators. The Agency continues to closely monitor monthly performance levels to ensure that the outcomes for FFY2007 and FFY2008 will reflect that same level of performance.

Additionally, IDVR regularly educates management and staff regarding their responsibilities towards meeting these goals. Progress is monitored regularly by the Field Services Chief.

Attachment 4.11(d)(1)(E): STRATEGIES FOR ASSISTING OTHER COMPONENTS OF THE STATEWIDE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT SYSTEM IN ASSISTING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Strategy 1:

In 2005, Governor Kempthorne consolidated six former Workforce Investment areas into two. The Workforce Development Council is now the sole Workforce Investment Board in the state to oversee a statewide regional planning area. This requires the Council to exercise special responsibility for development and oversight of the state’s workforce development infrastructure and program.

IDVR is actively involved as a Workforce Development partner in Idaho. A representative from IDVR regularly attends meetings with other Workforce Development partners to help set the agenda for the Quarterly Workforce Development Council meetings to ensure relevant topics are included for discussion or vote, to share important information regarding agency/community resources for mutual clientele, and provide information to the Board on selected issues. The partners promote system integration to the maximum extent feasible through the cross training of staff and participation in a continuous improvement process designed to increase outcomes and customer satisfaction. IDVR will strive to maintain this high level of cooperation and participation.

Strategy 2:

Currently, IDVR staff has a close working relationship in each of the One-Stop Centers across the state. A survey was conducted in 2006 to determine the current level of participation and interaction IDVR staff has in each of the One-Stop Centers. While each region's participation is customized to the needs and culture of the particular region, it was evident that a close working partnership exists with the One-Stops and WIA partners. At least one IDVR staff member is assigned at each of the local One-Stop Centers. The staff member has a regular schedule of attendance at the One-Stop or is on call with a five-minute response time due to the close proximity of the offices. The partners share resources where possible in accordance with each agency's guidelines when working with common clientele. IDVR will continue to maintain a close working relationship with the One-Stop Centers and partner agencies.

The comprehensive assessment identified concerns with some One Stop staff who do not demonstrate adequate understanding of disability issues and needs. In an effort to rectify this deficit, IDVR has chosen to invite key members of the One Stop program to attend a VR sponsored management meeting. The purpose of this invitation is to provide guidance and disability awareness to those keys DOL staff who are responsible for assisting individuals with disabilities to access the One Stop System. Opportunities for additional training in a more informal manner will be planned as well.

Attachment 4.11(d)(2)(A), (B) and (C): EXTENT TO WHICH THESE STRATEGIES WILL BE USED TO ADDRESS THE GOALS IDENTIFIED IN THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT, SUPPORT THE INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES AND OVERCOME IDENTIFIED BARRIERS

Finding qualified applicants for vacant counselor positions presents a challenge in the state. The Agency is actively working to recruit qualified master's level applicants; however, this has proven to be a difficult task. Attachment 4.10 addresses this staffing issue. Quality staff will enhance service delivery and outcomes for Agency clients, add credibility to the mentoring/role, model activities provided to client and ensure that staff is knowledgeable regarding counseling theories and general career guidance expertise. By focusing upon a high standard of professional competency, this emphasis will enhance the Agency's ability to meet or exceed the Federal Evaluation Standards and Performance Indicators.

Adequate funding to meet the demand is always an issue with the Agency and will continue to be of concern as costs for services increase. The use of comparable benefits will help to supplant Agency funds that can then be used elsewhere. The Statewide Needs Assessment indicated an overall theme regarding the need for additional funds for support services for individuals. The collaboration with other agencies and continued focus on WIA partners and SSA work incentives will assist in the on-going search for comparable benefits.

Transitioning youth are of concern both on a state and national level. A recent news release from Washington D.C. explains the continued need to address high school age youth and to reduce

drop out rates. According to John Podesta, President and CEO of the Center for American Progress “, America is facing a drop out crisis”. Two out of three students leave high school unprepared for college or the modern workplace. Minority and low income students are particularly at risk. This includes individuals with disabilities. By partnering with other agencies through the Inter-Agency Secondary Transition Working Group and other interested organizations, the resources and expertise provided to this population are greatly increased. This will address the drop out rate and enable students to become better prepared for employment.

The most recent 107 Monitoring Review indicated a deficit in the provision of standardized services statewide. A number of corrective action measures have been taken to ameliorate this concern. These strategies will support goals # 1 and # 3 promulgated in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) as well as support innovation and expansion activities.

- Field Services Policy Manual. A comprehensive Field Services Policy Manual has been completed and is available on the Agency internet web site. This manual has defined the spectrum of services and the intent behind those services. This document has dramatically increased the standardization of service delivery.
- Critical Case Management Templates. The counselor now has access to a desk reference that specifically outlines the various Federal/State protocols that must be addressed at the various junctures of case progress from Application through Post-Employment services.
- Internal agency quality assurance review document. The Agency has revised the internal audit to ensure that more focus is placed upon the consistency and validity of service delivery. The new review instrument is used to identify examples of “best case practice” and areas that do not meet Agency and federal standards as well the new client surveys will be used as a training tool for continuous improvement.

In order to overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities, IDVR has established a collaborative relationship with the Idaho Assistive Technology Project, which assures that the latest rehabilitation technology is available to clientele throughout the state. In addition, by supporting the Reutilization Demonstration Grant, individuals with the most significant disabilities will have better access to durable medical equipment that will enable them to actively participate in independent living, supported employment and other vocational activities.

Attachment 4.11(e)(2): EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF PROGRESS

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation maintains an effective working relationship with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities are effectively communicated. The Division meets with the SRC on a quarterly basis where Division staff share the State goals and priorities and input is solicited from the Council. The Division regularly consults with the Council regarding the development, implementation and revision of State policies and procedures pertaining to the provision of Vocational Rehabilitation services. The SRC conducts annual client satisfaction surveys in four regions of the state. IDVR integrates that information into the development and implementation of training that is conducted throughout the state. The survey results, along with the training that is adapted from those results, is designed to have a positive impact on the Federal Standards and Indicators that govern the outcome of the VR program.

The SRC and the Division built a specific communication plan designed to better manage the relationship between the two organizations. One component of the plan is for the Division's Administrator and the SRC Chairman to communicate by phone at a minimum of once every two weeks to discuss on-going items of concern. This has worked relatively well in maintaining communication. Every new policy developed by the Division is submitted to the SRC for discussion. Discussions typically occur prior to the final draft of the policy. On occasion, the SRC will vote on a policy change by the Division after discussion is concluded. If timeliness is a concern, the SRC receives information on important items by e-mail. Some of the SRC business is also conducted through the use of e-mail.

SRC members, especially the Chairman, are invited to IDVR's quarterly management meetings. In these meetings, the opportunity is afforded for interaction with Division Management Staff. The SRC is invited and encouraged to attend and participate in national and regional meetings as well. For example, SRC members have attended the last several regional and national CSAVR meetings.

ACTIONS TAKEN IN SUPPORT OF IDVR GOALS AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED IN THE FFY 2007 STATE PLAN:

Goal 1: To More Effectively Accommodate Increased Caseloads/Referrals.

Performance Strategies/Measures:

1.1 FFY 2005/06 Strategy (Priority): The Division will restructure its management configuration. The structure design will increase efficiency in processing and serving the increased client population across the state.

FFY 2005/06 Achieved: The restructure was implemented across the state successfully. Three senior Field Service Managers and a Field Chief were installed without increasing the overall number of management positions. This structure has facilitated the caseload/referral challenges by adding additional oversight and supervision statewide. As

a result of this restructuring Federal Standards and Indicators 1.1 and 1.2 increased substantially.

- 1.2 FFY 2005/06 Strategy (Priority):** The new Correction Region will institute meetings that will provide education about the VR process that will build closer professional relationships between IDVR and Correction's staff in the Boise Metropolitan vicinity.

FFY 2005/06 Achieved: Twelve meetings were conducted during FFY 2006. The current relationship between the two programs has improved significantly within the past twelve months. During FFY 2006 an employer survey was conducted within this region with positive input provided. Additionally, the Agency hired a full time job developer-marketer within the Boise vicinity who has worked closely with the Correction's staff and employers, which had a positive impact on Federal Performance Indicator 1.1 and 1.3.

Goal 2: To Decrease The Number Of Individuals With Disabilities Who Are Closed Unsuccessfully.

Performance Strategies/Measures:

- 2.1 FFY 2005/06 Objective (Priority):** Continued monitoring of the change in time limit for moving from eligibility status to plan status.

FFY 2005/06 Achieved: Based upon the ongoing emphasis that management continues to place upon the revised time frame for movement from eligibility to plan, the Division has continued to maintain a sustained decline in number of unsuccessful closures, which positively impacts Federal Performance Indicators 1.1 and 1.2.

Goal 3: Marketing/ Employer Development.

Performance Strategies/Measures:

- 3.1 FFY 2005-06 Objective (Priority):** The Division created a full-time job developer position for the Boise metropolitan vicinity. Additionally, the Division created a pilot project in the Lewiston Region in which a Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant assumed part-time duties as a job developer. Both of these positions were created to enhance employment outcomes.

FFY 2005/2006 Achieved: Statistics for the full-time job developer: (1) 114 employers contacted in FFY 2006, (2) 17 placements initiated during the first year. Statistics for the part-time job developer: (1) 30 employers contacted, (2) 13 placements initiated during the first year, (3) 1040 hours utilized for placement services. It is anticipated that the outcomes for the full-time job developer will increase dramatically during FFY2007. This

job development strategy positively impacted the Federal performance Indicators 1.1 and 1.2.

Goal 4: Funding:

Performance Strategies/Measures:

4.1 FFY 2005/2006 Objective (Priority): The Division will apply for the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance grant (WIPA).

FFY 2005/6 Achieved: Although the Division was not awarded the grant, our partner, the Client Advocacy Program (CAP), did secure the grant. Since both programs serve a mutual population, it is the intent of IDVR and CAP to collaborate during FFY2008 in the following ways to ensure maximum benefit to clients.

1. The WIPA staff will provide training to IDVR staff statewide via IDVR teleconferencing technology.
2. IDVR counselors will refer eligible participants to the WIPA grant.
3. Clients will be provided PASS plan services through the expertise provided by the WIPA grant.

It is anticipated that this partnering beginning FFY2008 will result in a positive impact on Federal Standards and Indicators 1.1 and 1.4.

Goal 5: To Maintain the Level of Supported Employment Services Required to Meet the Needs of Individuals with the Most Significant Disabilities:

Performance Strategies/Measures:

5.1 FFY 2005/06 Objective (Priority): IDVR will continue to allocate all Title VI Part B funding as direct client service funds. The Extended Employment Services Program (EES) is the primary provider of long-term support. The program also assists in coordinating DD waiver funding through Medicaid. (See Attachment 4.8(b)(4)).

FFY 2005/06 Achieved: At the time of the transfer of the EES program from the Department of Health and Welfare to IDVR, the Governor's Office set two directives for the program. The EES program was to more carefully address fiscal accountability and secondly, to be proactive in assisting clients in moving toward community based employment. The two full-time staff assigned to the EES have focused on these issues through timely tracking of utilization of funds, standardizing reports on employment information and individual plans, and monitoring the number of clients served by the program (Work Services and Community Supported Employment). EES staff continues to work closely with the Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) providing long-term support.

Attachment 4.11(e)(2)(D): STATUS OF EVALUATION STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Current status (FFY 2006) of IDVR's Standards and Performance Indicators:

Evaluation Standard 1: Employment Outcomes

Performance Indicator 1.1:

The Number of Individuals Achieving Employment Outcomes During the Current Performance Period Compared to the Number from the Previous Performance Period.

1,996 Rehabilitations - Indicator Passed

Performance Indicator 1.2:

The Percentage of Individuals Receiving Services Under an Individualized Plan for Employment Who Achieve Employment Outcomes.

62.5%- Indicator Passed

Performance Indicator 1.3:

Competitive Employment Outcomes as a Percentage of all Employment Outcomes.

99.3%-Indicator Passed

Performance Indicator 1.4:

Competitive Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Significant Disabilities as a Percentage of all Individuals with Competitive Employment Outcomes.

98.1% -Indicator Passed

Performance Indicator 1.5:

The Ratio of the Average VR Hourly Wage to the Average State Hourly Wage.

.70-Indicator Passed

Performance Indicator 1.6:

The Percentage of Individuals Achieving Competitive Employment Outcomes Who Report Their Own Income as the Primary Source of Support at Application Compared to at Closure.

68.9% - Indicator Passed

Evaluation Standard 2: Equal Access to Services

Performance Indicator 2.1:

Access to Services for Minorities as Measured by the Ratio of the Minority Service Rate to the Non-Minority Service Rate.

.921-Indicator Passed

Since IDVR has met or exceeded all Federal Indicators, the intent is to sustain that level of performance in FFY2007.

Attachment 4.11(e)(2)(E): UTILIZATION OF THE FUNDS RESERVED FOR INNOVATION AND EXPANSION ACTIVITIES IN FFY 2006

IDVR provides funding support for the State Rehabilitation Council expenditures including travel, lodging, advertising for town meetings, supplies, meeting room rentals, interpreters when necessary, facilitation services, and costs related to consumer satisfaction/outreach surveys, Cost: \$29,615.51

Funding support for the State Independent Living Council (SILC) is also allocated out of Innovation and Expansion funding. IDVR has allocated all independent living funding provided through Title I to the SILC. The SILC is responsible for disseminating funding to the Centers for Independent Living statewide as well as oversight. Cost: \$185,166.00

Attachment 6.3

QUALITY, SCOPE AND EXTENT OF SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) provides the full scope of Community Supported Employment Services (CSE) to those Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities, who require extended services to maintain employment, and have at least a reasonable expectation that a source of extended services (long-term support) will be available at the time of transition. CSE includes, if necessary, situational assessments through Trial Work Experiences (TWE), or other diagnostic strategies, to assess the individual's interests and abilities.

Once an appropriate Community Supported Employment position is identified for an individual, IDVR provides supported employment job coaching services for a period of up to 18 months. The services can be extended beyond 18 months, when appropriate, upon agreement of the consumer and the counselor.

Community Supported Employment Services provided to individuals are coordinated through an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) that includes a description of the services needed, the identification of the state, federal, or private programs that will provide the continuing support; and the basis for concluding that continuing support is available.

Community Supported Employment Services include the following:

1. If necessary, a supplemental evaluation to the evaluation of the rehabilitation potential provided under 34 CFR, Part 361.
2. Job developmental and placement into competitive, community integrated employment.
3. Traditional time-limited services needed to support the training in employment.
4. Any other service that would be identified as requisite to the targeted supported employment outcome.

Each individual's IPE describes the timing of the transition into extended services, which is to be provided by the long-term support provider following the termination of time-limited services by IDVR.

All Community Supported Employment Services are provided by qualified Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) who have demonstrated the capacity to provide the service and are accredited by either the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) or Rehabilitation Services Accreditation Systems (RSAS) accredited. Community Supported Employment Services are purchased through Title VI-B and Title 110 funds.

Current Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR) policy and the Federal regulations require a third party commitment in writing, to designate the long-term support provider. Since 07/01/2004, the Extended Employment Services (EES) Program under the IDVR is the main provider of long-term support, although those individuals who qualify for the DD waiver can use Medicaid funds. A CSE participant may only be transitioned to long-term support based on an assessment of rehabilitation goal achievement and job stability. Periodic monitoring occurs to ensure that each individual receiving Community Supported Employment Services is making satisfactory progress.

During FFY 2007, the Idaho State Legislature approved the rules governing the IDVR Extended Employment Services (EES) program.